PIO in Malaysia

†263. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the People of Indian Origin (PIO) are being neglected and persecuted in Malaysia;

(b) if so, the condition of the families of PIO there, at present; and

(c) the details of steps taken to safeguard economic-cultural rights and interests of the PIO living in Malaysia?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) There is a large community of Persons of Indian Origin in Malaysia who are citizens of that country and are well integrated in the Malaysian society. The population of Malaysian citizens of Indian Origin stands at about 1.9 million, which accounts for about 8% of the total population of Malaysia. Indians are the third largest ethnic group in Malaysia, after Malays and Chinese, Malaysia officially celebrates customs, traditions and religions of its multi-racial population. The people of Indian origin are active in various walks of the Malaysian society, economy and polity, including in the Government, and their rights as Malaysian citizens are also derived from the Malaysian Constitution. Members of Indian community have, however, also articulated their concerns and grievances regarding their standing in the country. Recently, a rally was organized by the Hindu Rights Action Force (HINDRAF) in Kuala Lumpur on 25 November, 2007 with the stated purpose of handing over a petition to the British High Commission in Kuala Lumpur seeking the support of Queen Elizabeth II for a class action suit filed in the UK for the exploitation of Indians who were brought to Malaysia as indentured labour. During this rally as well as subsequently, difficulties and concerns pertaining to economic and social conditions and religious rights of the Indian community in Malaysia have been highlighted.

(c) It may be recalled that in a *sou motu* statement made in Parliament on 30 November, 2007, the Minister of External Affairs referred to concerns expressed by Hon'ble Members of Parliament regarding the alleged harassment of participants of the rally organised by the HINDRAF in Kuala Lumpur on 25 November 2007 and subsequent related matters. The Minister of External Affairs stated that Government remain deeply solicitous for the welfare of People of Indian origin living abroad and noted that there is a large community of People of Indian Origin in Malaysia who are citizens of that country. He added that we have friendly relations with Malaysia and we are in touch with the Malaysian authorities in the related mater. During our interactions with Malaysian authorities, concerns expressed in India, including in the Parliament, regarding developments pertaining to the Indian community in Malaysia have been suitably conveyed.

Achievement of PM's visit to China

264. DR. V. MAITREYAN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the main reasons for the China visit undertaken by the Prime Minister recently;

(b) the main achievement of the visit;

(c) the main and useful declarations which were signed with the Chinese Government during the visit; and

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) whether any progress was made in resolving the long pending and crucial border dispute with the Chinese leaders and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (d) Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited China from 13 to 15 January 2008. PM held official talks with Premier Wen Jiabao and had separate meetings with Chinese President Hu Jintao and Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China, Wu Bangguo.

PM and Premier Wen Jiabao signed a joint document on 'A Shared Vision for the 21st Century between the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China'. They also witnessed signing of ten other documents covering Coperation in various fields, namely: for Cooperation between the Planning Commission and National Development and Reform Commission of China; on Cooperation between the two Ministries of Railways; MoU between Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation of India and Ministry of Construction, PRC; for Cooperation in Land Resource Management, Land Administration and Rehabilitation; MoU on Joint Medical Mission to commemorate the Indian Medical Mission to China between Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC); MoU for cooperation between ICCR and CPAFFC; on Cooperation in the area of Geo-sciences; on Cooperation in traditional medicine; MoU on mutual cooperation between NABARD and Agricultural Development Bank of China; and Protocol of Phytosanitary Requirements for the Export of Tobacco Leaves from India to China.

Both sides agreed that India-China relations are of regional and global significance. They recognised their 'significant historical responsibility to ensure comprehensive, balanced and sustainable economic and social development of the two countries and to promote peace and development in Asia and the world as a whole. India-China relations are not targeted at any country, nor will it affect their friendship with other countries'.

Both sides agreed to intensify further high-level exchanges between the leaders of the two countries. Both sides agreed that the Foreign Ministers of India and China will exchange visits in 2008. They also agreed to continue deepening the mutual understanding and trust between the armed forces and welcomed the successful conclusion of the first joint military training exercise and agreed to hold a second exercise in India in 2008. It was decided to increase the bilateral trade target from 40 billion US dollars by 2010 to 60 billion US dollars. The two Prime Ministers mandated their Ministers of Commerce to examine the Feasibility Study on the benefits of a Regional Trading Arrangement and make recommendations at an early date. It was also decided to establish a high-level Business Leaders Forum to advise the two Prime Ministers on the future of economic ties. PM conveyed India's appreciation for China's assistance in providing flood season data for some trans-border rivers. Both leaders agreed to expand cooperation in this area through the Expert Level Mechanism. In pursuance of the India-China Science & Technology Partnership agreed during the visit of Chinese President to India in November 2006, both sides have now identified earthquake engineering, disaster management, climate change, biotechnology and nano-sciences as areas for further operation in the priority area of science and technology.

e Boundary Question was also discussed during PM's visit. The two Prime Ministers The two sides remain firmly committed to resolving outstanding differences, including on the boundary question, through peaceful negotiations, while ensuring that such

differences are not allowed to affect the positive development of bilateral relations. The two sides reiterate their determination to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution to the boundary question and to build a boundary of peace and friendship on the basis of the Agreement on Political Parameters and Guiding Principles for the Settlement of the India-China Boundary Question concluded in April, 2005. The Special Representatives shall complete at an early date the task of arriving at an agreed framework settlement on the basis of this Agreement".

PM's visit has led to a broadening of our functional cooperation in bilateral areas and to the deepening of mutual understanding between our two countries.

Outcome of PM's visit to China

265. SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the outcome of Prime Minister's visit to China;

(b) whether there was any further discussion to stop diversion of Tsangpo, the source of river Brahmaputra for the greater benefit of the people of North-Eastern Region; and

(c) whether the recent visit of Prime Minister has resolved Chinese intrusion which has taken place particularly in Arunachal Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited China from 13 to 15 January, 2008. PM held official talks with Premier Wen Jiabao and had separate meetings with Chines President Hu Jintao and Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of China, Wu Bangguo.

PM and Premier Wen Jiabao signed a joint document on 'A Shared Vision for the 21st Century between the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China'. They also witnessed signing of ten other documents covering cooperation in various fields, namely: for Cooperation between the Planning Commission and National Development and Reform Commission of China; on Cooperation between the two Ministries of Railways; MoU between Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation of India and Ministry of Construction, PRC; for Cooperation in Land Resource Management, Land Administration and Rehabilitation; MoU on Joint Medical Mission to commemorate the Indian Medical Mission to China between Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC); MoU for cooperation between ICCR and CPAFFC; on Cooperation in the area of Geo-sciences; on Cooperation in traditional medicine; MoU on mutual cooperation between NABARD and Agricultural Development Bank of China; and Protocol of Phytosanitary Requirements for the Export of Tobacco Leaves from India to China.

Both sides agreed that India-China relations are of regional and global significance. They recognised their 'significant historical responsibility to ensure comprehensive, balanced and sustainable economic and social development of the two countries and to promote peace and development in Asia and the world as a whole. India-China relations are not targeted at any country, nor will it affect their friendship with other countries'.